TOPIC: MASTER PLAN UPDATE

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## I. <u>SUMMARY</u>

On March 13, 2012, the Department of Higher Education invited chief financial officers, chief academic officers, and chief student services officers from the state's public colleges and universities to a three-hour meeting at the Community College of Aurora. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss specific targets for each of the Commission's four master plan goals. During the meeting, Dr. Patrick Kelly of the National Center of Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) presented examples of state-level targets employed by other states. This was followed by discussions among participants concerning the establishing of Colorado specific targets.

### II. STAFF ANALYSIS

#### **NCHEMS Presentation**

Dr. Patrick Kelly from the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) provided a presentation concerning the ways in which other states have established state-level performance goals. A copy of Dr. Kelly's presentation is available in Addendum A.

#### Feedback from Campus Executive Officers, by Goal

Goal 1: Increase Attainment: Increase the attainment of high quality postsecondary credentials across the academic disciplines and throughout Colorado in order to meet anticipated workforce needs.

The general consensus among the campus officials in attendance at the March 13, 2012 meeting was that a goal at or above 60% makes sense for Colorado. In fact, goals of 66% ("two of three"), 67% percent (an estimate of the needs of the future Colorado workforce created by the Georgetown University Center for Education and the Economy; see Addendum B), and 70% were also offered. Regarding this last target, it was argued that a mix of 45% baccalaureate, 15% associates, and 10% certificates seemed in line with the current needs of the workforce as well as the current student demand. However, campus officers in attendance cautioned that additional research on actual workforce needs is necessary before committing to a particular statewide target. In addition, it was suggested that the CCHE not disaggregate academic credentials by major or field, with

the possible exceptions of those in STEM disciplines or heath related fields. Finally, it was argued that 2025 would be an appropriate target year for the delivery of the state's goals because it represents the year of graduation from high school for this fall's entering class of kindergarten students.

Goal 2: Improve Student Success: Improve student success through better outcomes in basic skills education, enhanced student support services and reduced average time to credential for all students.

Given the more explicit nature of this goal, the recommendations from the campus executive officers tended to concern specific activities regarding performance evaluation rather than the establishing of statewide targets. Specifically, campus officials recommended separating goals for full-time and part-time students, paying greater attention to years to completion rather than graduation or retention "rates," and including retention and transfer in performance criteria. Finally, and importantly, the executive officers made an appeal to the Department and the Commission: that these agencies provide better data and more information on best practices in order to assist campuses achieve their goals and resist the temptation to use data to control campus activities.

Goal 3: Diversify Enrollments and Reduce Attainment Gaps: Enhance access to and through postsecondary education to ensure that the system reflects the changing demographics of the state while reducing attainment gaps among students from underserved communities.

Campus executive officers recommended that the CCHE's master plan focus on disparities by income (financial aid status), race/ethnicity, and geographic region. Also, the recommended statewide target for the accomplishment of this goal is to have the achievement gaps in Colorado be less than or equal to the national average. Campus officials also recommended using data on the pipeline of students—primarily from the state's K12 system—and information on the health of the economy to gauge the appropriateness of benchmarks and ongoing systemwide performance. Sample goals offered by the participants included the following:

- Reducing the gap between minority and majority degree completion by XX% over the next ten years.
- Increasing low-income completers by XX% over the next ten years.
- Increasing the number of STEM graduates from underserved communities by XX% over 10 years

Regarding the use of data, campus executive officers recommended establishing benchmarks against which future progress would be evaluated, using multiple years' data in evaluating progress in order to smooth annual anomalies, and to narrow the state's focus on certain

regions in the state. Executive officers also recommended disaggregating institutions by type (i.e., two-year and four-year) and explicitly recognizing the availability of state and federal revenues to better understand the campus-level context concerning the achievement of statewide goals.

Goal 4: Restore Balance in Postsecondary Revenues and Maintain Productivity: Develop resources, through increases in state funding, that will allow public institutions of higher education to successfully meet projected enrollment demands, lower resident students' relative share of college costs, and maintain the state's position as a national leader in the ratio of credentials produced relative to state investments in higher education.

The discussion on this goal started with general agreement that it is difficult to set performance goals concerning revenues when the institutions have no control over decisions to dedicate state revenues to higher education. Campus executives recognized that this goal is unique because it is a self-imposed directive by the Commission to expand its role as an advocate for Colorado's system of public colleges and universities and to work on strategies to improve state funding.

Having identified these points as a foundation, the discussion moved to specific ideas that, from an institutional point of view, would assist in presenting a better case for higher education in Colorado. Specifically, the campus executives offered the following ideas:

- The state needs to tell a better story about Colorado's colleges and universities and tie that story directly to the concerns of the citizens of the state. Citizens should understand the direct link between the success of Colorado's higher education system and students to a stronger economy producing more and better jobs.
- o Address the misconception that Colorado's public colleges and universities are a private good. Colorado citizens should understand that these are resources that belong to everyone and are critically important for the state's economic security.
- Recognize that current levels of funding are unsustainably low and, in order to address them, the state will need to consider not only base operational revenue, but also revenue for controlled maintenance and capital assets.
- The discussion about state resources should include an understanding that higher education is trending away from the physical campus and the traditional student.

 Any case for more money should first make a compelling case for streamlined, efficient delivery, such as improving the use of technology, distance education, and adult training and retraining programs.

Campus executives suggested that revenue models should deduct nonresident revenues in order to more accurately illustrate Colorado's contribution to its postsecondary system. The executives also said that future models of revenue and performance should take into consideration students' expectations for higher education, for example, that institutions maintain state of the art facilities, instruction, and technology.

The next meeting between the Department of Higher Education and campus executive officers will take place on Tuesday, April 17 at the Tivoli Student Center on the Auraria Campus. This meeting will address the ways in which the state should measure performance—at the state level—for each of the CCHE's master planning goals.

#### III. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

No recommendation. Discussion item only.

### V. <u>SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION</u>

See Addenda A & B

### **STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

23-1-108 C.R.S.

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# Addendum A:

Dr. Patrick Kelly's Presentation on Systemwide Goals from Other States

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# Addendum B:

Georgetown University's Center for Education and the Economy's Estimates of Colorado Workforce Demand, 2010-2018, as Excerpted from the Report "Help Wanted: Future Projections of Jobs and Education Requirements Through 2018" (June, 2010).

See: http://www9.georgetown.edu/grad/gppi/hpi/cew/pdfs/colorado.pdf